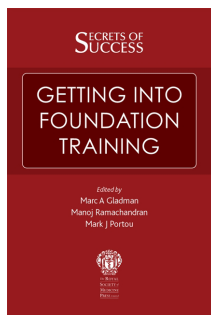


## Book Reviews

### SECRETS OF SUCCESS: GETTING INTO FOUNDATION TRAINING

Marc A Gladman, Manoj Ramachandran, Mark J Portou. The Royal Society of Medicine Press. September 2008

Paperback, 182pp. £17.95. ISBN: 978-1-85315-886-5



This textbook, published in 2008, gives advice to Final Year students applying for the National Foundation Training Programme for F1 and F2 doctors. The problems with this application process over the past several years are well known to senior students, junior doctors, programme directors, postgraduate Deans, universities, the public and indeed politicians. This book is timely and is an effort to help students applying for their F1 and F2 positions. The difficulty with this book is that it will become rapidly out of date in such a changing field, but nonetheless it does give basic groundwork and advice on the completion of the application form.

Quite rightly, at the beginning of their textbook, in the preface, the authors have emphasised that the examples which they have provided in their text must not be copied nor modified as this would be plagiarism, which is looked upon very seriously.

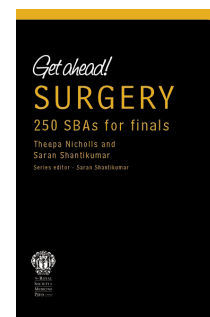
While the textbook was published in 2008, in this rapidly changing field, it is probably time for a new edition or at least a reprint with some changes. The book is up-to-date at the time of publication, including giving an overview of the Tooke Inquiry, a guide to the United Kingdom Medical Schools and the number of associated training positions, (Page 9). This is already dated and the next edition will require revision. There then follows a brief guide to United Kingdom Foundation Schools, with the Hospital Trusts associated, and the appropriate contact numbers. Again, in a changing field, these first few chapters will require revision over the next year or two. Thereafter, there is some information on the application process, which is relatively generic and useful. The following chapters relate to likely questions on the application form and how to complete them to maximise the chance of a successful application. While, of course, the questions change year by year, nonetheless many of the questions have a generic core. These chapters are very useful indeed, from such basic advice as reading the question repeatedly, while writing one's answer, to providing samples of topics such as coping under pressure, team working, prioritisation, the patient as a focus of care and professional integrity.

Overall this is a useful little book which can be recommended to senior students preparing for this all-important application. I would, however, finish this review by emphasising the caveat already mentioned by the authors, that on no account should students be tempted to plagiarise directly, or in a modified form, any of the examples provided in this text.

Prof Roy AJ Spence

### GET AHEAD! SURGERY: 250 SBAS FOR FINALS

Theepa Nicholls, Saran Shantikumar. The Royal Society of Medicine Press. March 2009. Paperback. 225pp. £14.95. ISBN: 978-1-85315-727-1



This textbook, published in 2009, is aimed at Final Year students of Medicine sitting their Surgical examination paper. It contains 250 Single Best Answer questions. The layout is that the book contains five practice papers, each containing 50 questions. The student is advised to allow between 1-1½ hours per paper. The book gives the correct answer and, usefully, a brief commentary to that answer. There is a satisfactory, albeit short, examination-orientated discussion of the answer.

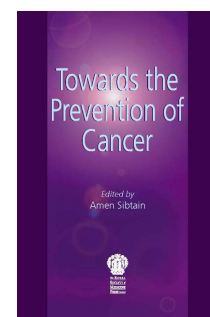
As with any textbook of this nature, there can be a few, albeit relatively minor, critiques such as the absence of the mention of laparoscopic surgery when discussing appendicectomy and perforated duodenal ulcer. The description of thyroid cancer would warrant a line or two on the usefulness of fine needle biopsy in most thyroid cancers apart from follicular tumour (in which it cannot distinguish benign from malignant). On Page 45, Question 1, on gallbladder incisions, it would be more appropriate to include a discussion of laparoscopic gallbladder incisions which are, by far, the most common method of surgical access for today's gallbladder procedures. In the index, under Thyroid Cancers, Pages 33 and 123 are given, but on Page 123 there is no mention of thyroid cancer. Leaving aside these relatively minor points, this book is a useful revision text for students undertaking Final Medicine examinations in Surgery.

The authors are relatively young, one being a Registrar in Emergency Medicine, the other being an academic Fellow in Vascular Surgery, and have a sense of the current standards of final surgical examinations in Medicine. The questions are in a modern format and the commentaries are, by and large, timely and up-to-date. The book can be recommended as a revision text in those anxious few months prior to medical finals.

Prof Roy AJ Spence

### TOWARDS THE PREVENTION OF CANCER

Dr Amen Sibtain. The Royal Society of Medicine Press. October 2007. Paperback, 80pp. £25.00. ISBN: 978-1-85315-796-7



This book represents the contents of a symposium held in 2007 on the prevention of cancer. There is a slight misnomer in that the first half of the book does examine topics such as smoking, nutrition, alcohol, obesity etc. which relate specifically to cancer prevention, while the second half of the book relates to early detection and screening for particular cancers, such as colon, prostate and breast. Many of the presenters and contributors are well known in their field, such as Bruce Ponder on the genetic aspects of cancer, and Richard Peto on the role of smoking in